

BLACK HAWK

The phantom of Indiana

BY LOU WEDEMAR

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The narrative, "Black Hawk," a thrilling story of life in Indiana, is purely fiction and its leading characters exist only in the author's imagination.

SYNOPSIS

Black Hawk, whose sign is a winged death head, demands evacuation of central Indiana and the loss of the post office from an airplane. He has threatened the President. He has attempted to kidnap the author and one of his agents or Whisepers, kills himself when thwarted.

Part of the military intelligence in the U. S. Army reserves has been assigned to the task in view now. Ava Breen, Indianapolis society girl, and her father, General George, wealthy scientist at her father's insistence.

Following the attack on the terminal, Bob and Police Lieutenant Quintin spend the night in the Claypool. Although the men are safe now, Quintin killed his hatchet man.

In a hollow of the hatchet handle is a small note which reads: "Come to see how Indianapolis off the map unless every resident moves out." The Claypool is the last stand, so far, for Ava Breen. An air patrol is formed to guard the city. A personal ad appears in the paper: "Wanted—Front Torch Leads the Way."

Bob and Ava, on their way downtown, are ambushed and are forced down a manhole and find themselves in a tunnel.

CHAPTER NINE (Continued)

They stumbled along for an hour, Ava finally leaning against Bob, exhausted.

Bob estimated they were near Sixtieth street when they came to a halt.

"We've traveled more than a mile," he said, "and nothing has happened. Do you want to rest?"

Not a breath of air stirred down there, and the silence was broken only by a faint rumble, which might be from traffic on the street level.

"Is it safe to rest?" Ava asked.

"I suppose so. If he's going to turn the water on, it will catch us before we reach the end anyway."

"Water! Why, we'd be drowned like rats!"

"YES. And no one would ever know what happened to us. Our bodies would be washed ashore on the banks of White river, somewhere near the new Meridian street bridge. That's all any one would ever know."

"Did you know about this tunnel?"

"Yes. That's one of the bits of knowledge we have in the intelligence service. It has a military value, you can see."

"And the Phantom wants you to tell him about such things—so he can use them against us?"

"Yes, I suppose so. With this tunnel, for instance, he could plant a line of bombs across Indianapolis, and at a signal wipe out half the city!"

THEY resumed walking. Search as they would, there were no openings to the surface. There were not even any vents, for the tunnel had been built before they were considered important.

"We ought to be near the river now," Bob said at length.

A moment after he spoke a rushing sound became audible.

"He has turned on the water?"

Ava asked, quite calmly.

"I don't think so. Not yet. That's probably the river at the end of the tunnel."

They came then into a slightly wider section of the tunnel, and Bob's lantern showed a small cell at one side.

Suspended from the top by thin wires were two instruments—a microphone and radio loud-speaker. Fastened to the microphone was a note: "When you get here call me."

Bob looked at Ava. Should he obey the note, or should they go on and see if they could escape at the end? Certainly Black Hawk had arranged for either eventuality. They might as well talk with him. Bob fixed in his mind, as well as he could, where they were, in case they got out and could trace back on the surface.

"Hello!" he called tentatively.

There was a response at once.

"Hello, Major Martyne," said a sneering, high-pitched voice. "Are

(To Be Continued)

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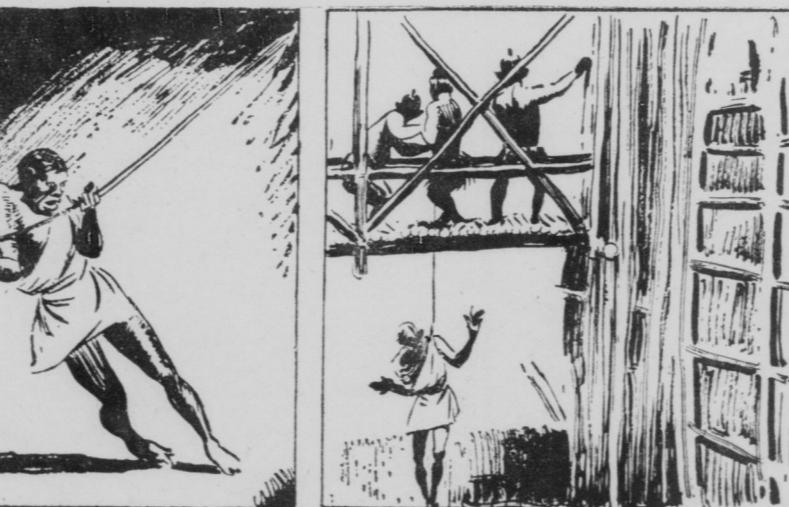
ALLEY OOP



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



TARZAN THE APE MAN



Immediately after the pygmies barred the only entrance, a rope shot from the shadows opposite and was drawn taut over the shoulders of one of the safari boys. Shrieking, he was pulled along the dirt floor, his terrified cries rising above the drums and chanting.

The man had been caught by some of the pygmies on a bridge-like structure above the gorilla pit. Dangling like a pendulum, amid the acclaim of the dwarfs, the helpless native was lowered, the first victim of the horrible man-thing.

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—By Edgar Rice Burroughs

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